

Middle Ground Theatre Company Ltd
presents

THE WORLD STAGE PREMIÈRE of

Ellis Peters'
Gadfael

in

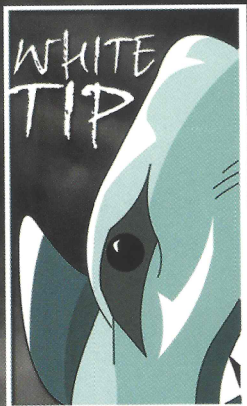
**THE
VIRGIN
IN THE ICE**

A classic medieval murder mystery

ADAPTED, DESIGNED & DIRECTED BY
MICHAEL LUNNEY

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THE WORLD STAGE PREMIERE of

Ellis Peters'
Cadfael

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**THE
VIRGIN
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A classic medieval murder mystery

DOUBLE BAFTA AWARD NOMINEE

GARETH THOMAS

as Brother Cadfael

with

RUPERT BAKER
CHRISTOPHER BERRY
HANNAH BURTON
GREG FITCH
PAUL HASSALL
TOM KANJI
JOHN LANGFORD
ADAM LLOYD-JAMES
JENNY-MAY DARCY
DANIEL MURRAY
JAMES MORLEY
JAMES PALMER
GEORGE TELFER
and
RICHARD WALSH

ADAPTED, DESIGNED & DIRECTED BY
MICHAEL LUNNEY

MUSIC

LYNETTE WEBSTER & RAY MYTTON

LIGHTING DESIGN
BOB HODGES

FILM PRODUCTION
WHITE TIP MEDIA

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Gareth Thomas

Middle Ground Theatre Company

This world premiere stage adaptation of Ellis Peter's *Cadfael: The Virgin In The Ice* marks 25 years since Middle Ground Theatre Company began touring quality drama across the UK.

The company was founded back in October 1988. The name 'Middle Ground' was chosen due to geographical location more than anything else, and the company opened its first national tour (of museums and art galleries) in Scotland the following spring, with a new piece of writing about the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood.

Other early tours included a huge array of venues, from castles to hotel lounges, and the production of six plays for ten-week tours of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland. The remote communities of Shetland, Orkney, Barra, Benbecula, Islay, Arran, Harris, Jura, Mull and Lewis have all played host to Middle Ground.

Following these productions the company progressed to bigger theatres and eventually to number one tours. Today it is one of the UK's most prolific and acclaimed production companies, having mounted over 40 productions.

Cadfael: The Virgin in the Ice tops a list of both 'classic' and 'alternative' drama produced by Middle Ground over the past 25 years, including: *The Holly and the Ivy*, *Dial M for Murder*, *Gaslight*, *Spring and Port Wine*, *Brief Encounter*, *Soe Well I Love Thee*, *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*, *I Have Been Here Before*, *The Family Way*, *An Inspector Calls*, *The Christmas When Felix Fox Nearly Cooked His Goose*, *The Late Edwina Black*, *A Visit From Scrooge*, *Wood Dragon*, *Dangerous Corner*, *An Ideal Husband*, *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?*, *Present Laughter*, *Flare Path*, *The Railway Children*, *Far From the Madding Crowd*, *Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune*, *Billy Liar*, *Meeting Joe Strummer*, *Tunes of Glory*, *Columbo: Prescription Murder*, *The Importance of Being Earnest* and *On Golden Pond*.

In 2010, Middle Ground's productions of *Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune* and *Columbo* brought Hollywood stars Kelly McGillis and Dirk Benedict to UK theatres for the first time.

If you would like to be kept in touch with all future productions, please visit our website at www.middlegroundtheatre.co.uk where you can join our online mailing list or follow us on Facebook. You can also email us at middleground@middlegroundtheatre.co.uk.

Middle Ground's Artistic Director and Producer is founder member Michael Lunney.



The World of

Brother Cadfael



Saint Benedict of Nursia, detail from a fresco by Fra Angelico

For Brother Cadfael, the freedom offered by the Rule of Saint Benedict is, quite literally, a godsend. In any other Catholic order of monks, he might have found himself bound by vows of silence and separation from the world. Under the rules of his order, he is allowed not only to mingle and interact with others, but to challenge and confront them, even to the level of the king.

Saint Benedict of Nursia had founded his first monastery in the year 529. While he would go on to found around a dozen more, there is no hard evidence that he actually intended to launch a full order of monks in his name. In fact, even to call it an order is a bit of a misnomer, since there is no fixed organisation to which Benedictine monasteries submit. Instead, the guidelines that he laid out are very much to do with individual piety and shared fellowship within a single community, and each group of monks - living together under an abbot or prior - is autonomous, even today. What unites them is the Rule of Saint Benedict, a book designed to guide his followers in communal living, which he wrote towards the end of his life.

Benedict - often referred to as the father of Western monasticism - bases his community model on the family, with an abbot as father and the monks themselves as brothers, although the format is equally applicable to nuns under an abbess. Following the Latin motto 'ora et labora' (pray and work), daily life consists of a series of religious services, at three-hour intervals throughout the day and night, interspersed with meals, prayer, sleep, study and work. Every community, however, is granted its own independence and the abbot has considerable leeway in the operation of the monastery, subject to strictures laid down in the Rule about how his flock should be treated.

Benedict himself, born in around 480, had lived in Rome but became disenchanted with the immorality of the disintegrating society there and made the decision to follow the kind of hermit, monastic life that had been established more than 150 years earlier in Egypt. Before long, he was attracting disciples of his own and finally he formalised their living arrangements in a series of monasteries in Subiaco, Italy, later moving to Monte Cassino in the south of the country, where he founded the great Benedictine monastery that still stands today.

His book was a landmark of medieval writing and thought, offering ideas of democracy (to a degree) in a society that was firmly non-democratic, and of a written constitution, besides its enormous religious significance. It covered domestic affairs, from sleeping quarters to kitchen chores and clothes, alongside weightier matters such as humility, reverence and godliness. At the end of the eighth and early

ninth centuries, the Holy Roman Emperor Charlemagne ordered copies of Benedict's Rule to be distributed across Europe as the standard to which monastic communities should aspire, and for more than 15 centuries it has remained a constant in Catholic philosophy. Benedict himself was adopted as the patron saint of Europe by Pope Paul VI in 1964.

This, then, is the community to which Brother Cadfael belongs, and within which he operates his own unique style of detective work. But alongside the religious context, there lies another major influence on the way he conducts his business: the political world of 12th-century England.

It's hard these days to imagine the kind of infighting and regional squabbles that typified the English aristocracy at the time. Less than 70 years after the invasion of these shores by the Norman duke William - 'the Conqueror', in common parlance - his grandchildren were ripping the country apart in their efforts to stamp authority on a single, unified kingdom.

William's fourth son, Henry, had ruled since 1100 but suffered a succession crisis when his only legitimate son, also called William, died in the notorious *White Ship* disaster of 1120. This left the king with only one legitimate child, his daughter Matilda - or Maud, as she is known in the Cadfael books. Although Henry took great pains to have his barons swear allegiance to her, promising they would support her right to the throne after his death, there were a number of reasons why this proved highly contentious. Apart from anything else, no woman had ever reigned over England in her own right. But Matilda was also married to the deeply unpopular Geoffrey of Anjou, and the thought of an Angevin monarch on the English throne was anathema to the Norman ruling classes. Instead, her cousin Stephen de Blois - who had narrowly missed sailing on the *White Ship* himself thanks to a bout of diarrhoea - stepped in ahead of his two older brothers and the immediate heir to seize the crown after Henry's death in 1135.

Within months, the country was at war with itself. On top of threats from the Welsh and Scottish, Stephen faced rebellions among his own English barons that reached a peak in 1139 when Matilda launched an invasion. Styling herself 'Empress' thanks to a short-lived childhood marriage to the Holy Roman emperor Henry V, Matilda won territory in the south-west and even managed to capture Stephen at the Battle of Lincoln in 1141, allowing her to claim the throne. However, on her way to the coronation in London, she was forced back by hostile crowds and subsequently defeated at the rout of Winchester. Trading the prisoner Stephen for her half-brother Robert, she never managed to win the crown itself, and had to accomplish a narrow escape across the frozen River Thames during the siege of Oxford in 1142.



Stephen of Blois, grandson of William the Conqueror, who reigned as King of England from 1135 to 1154
Credit: IAM / akg images

The war raged on for years, with the English barons quietly assuming more power across the north and east of the country as the two factions fought over the crown. Matilda departed for the continent in 1148, leaving her son Henry to lead the campaign in England, while Stephen tried to persuade the Church to accept his son Eustace as rightful heir. By 1153, weary of the dispute and mired in a stalemate that appeared to have no resolution, Stephen and Henry settled their differences with the Treaty of Winchester, in which Stephen acknowledged Henry as his heir. When he died a year later, the new King Henry II began a long period of reconstruction and reconciliation as the first monarch of a Plantagenet dynasty that would last for 250 years.

It's a period described by one contemporary chronicler as "19 long winters in which Christ and his saints were asleep". Victorian historians dubbed it "the Anarchy". Either way, it was certainly a time of deep unrest across the country, nowhere more so than in the disputed lands around Shrewsbury, close to the Welsh border. The Benedictine abbey there, an oasis of religious dedication in the midst of a country torn apart by civil war, provides a microcosm of the wider world in which Brother Cadfael has lived.

As a character, he embodies not only the disciplined, devout aspects bestowed by the monk's cowl, but also the swashbuckling, do-or-die attributes of the mercenary, perfectly reflecting the bloody, lawless climate in which King Stephen and Empress Matilda played out their bitter rivalry.

Michael Davies
© John Good

A Life of Two



*Ellis Peters with Derek Jacobi on the set of the TV series Cadfael, 1995
Credit: ITV/Rex Features*

In some ways, the 12th-century Benedictine monk Brother Cadfael ap Meilyr ap Dafydd has the best of both worlds. For 40 years, he lives as a wandering gun-for-hire, leaving his peasant family as a teenager to learn the trade of a woolmonger before joining the First Crusade and a life as an adventurer overseas. Spells as a soldier, seaman and mercenary finally give way to a gentle conversion to the Catholic faith and the Benedictine way of living later on in life. He trades a career of excitement and exotic travel for the simplicity and solitude of Shrewsbury Abbey.

But if he thought he was going to get a quiet retirement, he was in for a shock. Thanks to his punctiliously accurate creator, Edith Pargeter, writing under the pseudonym of

Ellis Peters, he was instead bound for a new career as detective, diplomat, doctor and herbalist. Part of the author's consummate skill in achieving this fully rounded character is the historical context in which she places him. His previous experiences - "having lived half his life in battles", as he's described in the books - give Cadfael a wholly different and rather modern sensibility within his feudal world.

The full revelation of Brother Cadfael's past comes slowly, over the course of the 20 novels in which he appears. Ellis Peters drip-feeds the information, weaving it carefully into a variety of historically accurate set pieces, including the ongoing civil war of the time. The resulting figure is complex, flawed and very human, a kind of Everyman that readers can relate to and understand, as well as viewing the medieval world through the prism of the present day. He is neutral in the matter of the dispute over the crown, having close friends in both camps; he is extraordinarily liberal - especially given his holy orders - in the treatment of criminals, even to the point of leniency for certain killers; and he is equally at home in the company of Muslims and Christians, princes and peasants, or the English and the Welsh.

nalves

Perhaps it is this universality, the all-embracing generosity of spirit he displays, that has made him so consistently popular since the first book, *A Morbid Taste for Bones*, was published in 1977. Set in 1137, two years after Stephen de Blois snatched the throne as the nephew to the dead King Henry, the book establishes many of the personal traits and supporting characters that would continue throughout the series. Unusually among series with a common central protagonist, Peters follows a timeline through the 20 novels at the rate of roughly one or two a year, culminating in the final book, *Brother Cadfael's Penance*, from 1994, in which she draws together the loose ends of the ongoing narrative and brings her monk's tale to a conclusion. Apparently she planned it that way, and she completed the task only months before her own death.

However, the pattern Peters set up through the series - unveiling a continuous story arc across eight or nine years of the early 12th century - didn't allow for much backstory. How, for instance, had this one-time crusader and father of an illegitimate Muslim son come to be living a supposedly quiet life under the Rule of Saint Benedict in rural England? The solution came in the form of a collection of short stories, *A Rare Benedictine* (1988), in which Peters was able to fill in some of the gaps in Cadfael's past, including his conversion in *A Light on the Road to Woodstock*.

By this time, Cadfael was proving of interest to programme-makers and dramatists in other media. The BBC aired a number of adaptations on Radio 4, initially starring Glyn Houston in the title role, later Philip Madoc. Many of these are still available on CD, some featuring the wonderful tones of Sir Michael Hordern as narrator.

But Cadfael's popularity went through the roof when ITV launched the first of four television series in 1994, with Sir Derek Jacobi as the eponymous hero. Thirteen of the books were eventually adapted into 90-minute episodes, filmed in Hungary, that were screened between 1994 and 1998. All but one are pretty faithful to the original books, although some characters are combined and altered to allow for the format of the medium, and the episodes are out of sequence from their source material. Jacobi's portrayal of the military man-turned-monk has been hailed as his greatest performance since *I, Claudius* and it certainly helped to position Cadfael as one of the most memorable of fictional detectives.

With the advent of new technologies in the 21st century, the stories are now also available as MP3 audiobooks and e-books for digital readers. The worldly wise Benedictine with an open heart and an open mind continues to attract new audiences nearly two decades after the death of his creator.

Remembering Edith Pargeter

By Eileen Greatorex



Edith was a woman with a mind as sharp as a diamond. She could beat you hands-down at Trivial Pursuit, and would frequently turn to you and say in a disappointed way: “Didn’t you know that dear?”

She was born into a household with little money, but full of music and literature. The youngest of three children, she had an older brother Ellis, and the middle child was called Margaret, known always as Peggy. They remained close all of their lives, and spent most of their Saturdays listening to music.

She started her working life as a chemist’s shop assistant, and in her spare time she wrote poetry. It wasn’t until 1936 that she had her first novel published, entitled *Hortensius Friend of Nero*.

Edith joined the WRENS during the war, and was stationed in the signals office at “Western Approaches HQ” in Liverpool. There she was awarded the British Empire Medal for Wholehearted Devotion to Duty. Her writing career continued during the war years, which inspired novels such as *She Goes To War* (always thought to be strongly biographical), *The Eighth Champion of Christendom*, *A Reluctant Odyssey* and *Warfare Accomplished*.

After the war Edith and Ellis journeyed to Czechoslovakia.

Edith was deeply moved by the visit, and wrote the novel *The Fair Young Phoenix*, which was published in 1948.

She later went on to translate many Czech classics into English, including Jan Neruda’s *Tales of the Little Quarter*, a very popular book in Czechoslovakia. Edith was completely self-taught in Czech, a language in which she was fluent and from which she continued to translate novels for many more years.

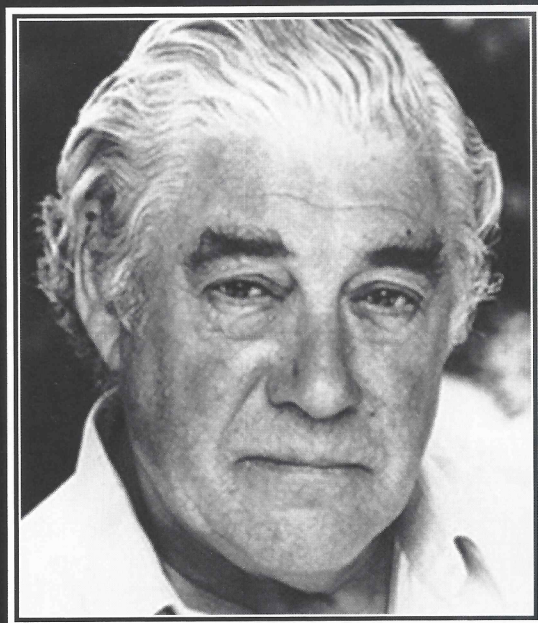
Ellis and Edith would drive across Europe every year in their Volkswagen Beetle to Prague, making many friends along the way. She was presented with the Czechoslovak Society for International Relations Gold Medal and Ribbon in the 1960’s. More novels and short stories continued to be published, including thirteen *Inspector Felse* novels in the crime genre.

Cadfael came later in life with his first novel *A Morbid Taste For Bones*. She said that she had only found one person in history with his name. She also said that this was only meant to be a one-off novel, but obviously Cadfael didn’t want to go away, as she wrote another 19 novels! Edith used to say to us: “I wonder what he will do next?”

She received an MBE presented by The Queen, and was very proud of that achievement. She also received an honorary degree from Birmingham University.

Gareth Thomas

• Brother cadfael •



Gareth trained at RADA and is now an Associate Member. He has been twice nominated for a BAFTA for his performances in *Stocker's Copper* and *Morgan's Boy*. Gareth rose to fame in the title role of hit television series *Blake's 7*.

Other television appearances include *The Avengers*, *Children of the Stone*, *Coronation Street*, *Z-Cars*, *Special Branch*, *Sutherland's Law*, *Public Eye*, *Edward VII*, *Who Pays the Ferryman?*, *Bergerac*, *By the Sword Divided*, *The Citadel*, *Knights of God*, *Country Matters*, *London's Burning*, *Casualty*, *Taggart*, *Heartbeat*, *Sherlock Holmes*, *How Green Was My Valley*, *Torchwood* and *Midsomer Murders*.

Gareth has also appeared on stage in many productions. Notable appearances include RSC productions of *Twelfth Night*, *Othello* and *Anna Christie*; English Shakespeare Company productions of *Henry IV, Part 1* and *Part 2* and

Henry V; and *King Lear*, *Educating Rita*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *Moving Objects* (Edinburgh Festival Herald Angel Award), *The Crucible*, *Equus* and *Déjà Vu*. In 2010 Gareth gave an acclaimed performance as Ephraim Cabot in *Desire Under the Elms* at the New Vic Theatre.

Gareth has also been in many radio dramas all over the country, and is currently Sir Graham Forbes in the 'annual' Paul Temple production from BBC Scotland.

In 2001 he appeared in *Storm Warning*, an audio drama based on *Doctor Who* by Big Finish Productions. He also played the part of Kalendorf in the Big Finish Productions Dalek Empire series. In 2006 he appeared as a guest star in the Doctor Who spin-off series *Torchwood* and, in 2012, Gareth returned to the role of "Roj Blake" in Big Finish Productions' *Blake's 7: The Liberator Chronicles*, a series of dramatic readings.

CAST

In order of appearance

George Telfer

brother elyas

Christopher Berry

alain le gaucher

Rupert Baker

guarrin / reynar dutton

Greg Fitch

brother dennis / outlaw

James Morley

abbot radulfus / john druel

John Langford

brother herward / thurstan

Adam Lloyd-James

brother edward / outlaw

Gareth Thomas

brother cadfael

Paul Hassall

hugh beringar

Richard Walsh

prior leonard

Daniel Murray

yves hugonin

Jenny-May Darcy

sister hilaria

James Palmer

evrard boterel

Hannah Burton

ermina hugonin

Tom Kanji

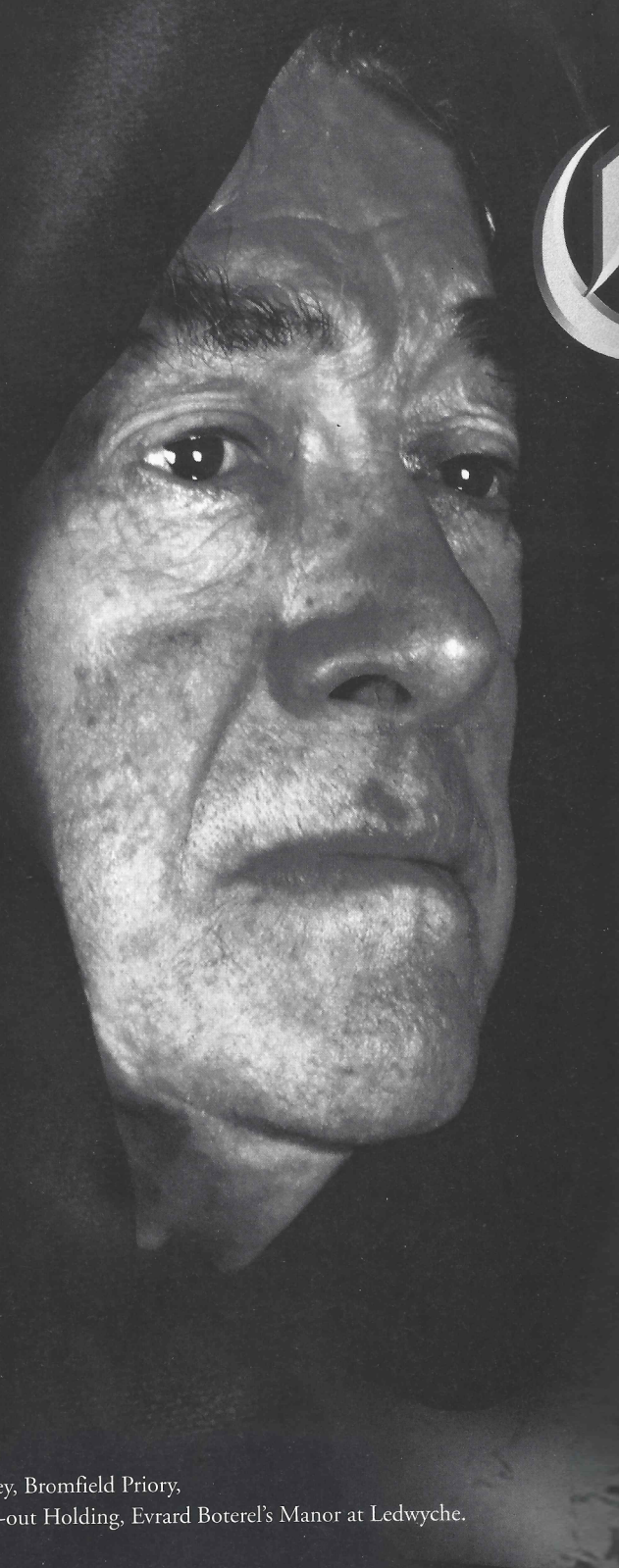
olivier de bretagne

ACT I

Titterstone Clee Shropshire Countryside, Shrewsbury Abbey, Bromfield Priory,
Thurstan's Homestead, Hopton Brook, John Druel's Burnt-out Holding, Evrard Boterel's Manor at Ledwyche.

ACT II

Titterstone Clee Shropshire Countryside, Bromfield Priory, Outlaw's Eyrie.



Ellis Peters' Cadfael

in THE VIRGIN IN THE ICE

A classic medieval murder mystery

SETTING

Shropshire, November 1139. The tide of civil war has risen suddenly, sweeping over the city of Worcester and washing away half of its inhabitants, livestock, property and women. Those of its inhabitants who could get away in time scurry for their lives northwards away from the marauders, to burrow into hiding wherever there is manor or priory, walled town or castle strong enough to afford them shelter...

Adapted, Directed & Designed by
Production Manager
Production Artwork / Backcloth Artwork /
Photography / Filming / Sound
Assistant Director
Lighting Design
Original Music composed by

Company Technical Manager

Master Set Carpenter
Master Scenic Artist
Scenic Artists

Wig Master & Makeup
Assistant Costume Design
Fight Advisor
Costume Hire

Bespoke Costume
Bespoke Footwear
Medieval Armoury
Additional Production Photography

Hilgard Von Bingen's "Quia Ergo Femina"
performed by
Lute played by
Rebek played by
Percussion
Gregorian Chants performed by

The Benedictine Monks Of Santo Domingo De Silos
The Benedictine Monks Of The Abbey Of Saint-Maurice
& Saint Maur, Clervaux

Casting
Assistant Stage Managers / Understudies
Casting
Assistant Stage Managers / Understudies

Film Location Co-Ordinator
Location Land Owner
Horses Supplied By
Horses
Location Parking
Virgin in the Ice Model

Accountants

MICHAEL LUNNEY
MAT LARKIN
WHITE TIP MEDIA
RICHARD WALSH
BOB HODGES
LYNETTE WEBSTER &
RAY MYTTON
JEREMY BARNABY

ANDY MARTIN
JON GOODWIN
DAN O'NEILL
JOHNNY O'HANLON
EMMA LOCKEY

ANDREW WHITEOAK
VICTORIA MAY
MARCUS FERNANDO
BRISTOL COSTUME HIRE
ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY
BRISTOL COSTUME HIRE
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VICTORIA MAY

LYNETTE WEBSTER
RAY MYTTON
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JENNY-MAY DARCY
GREG FITCH

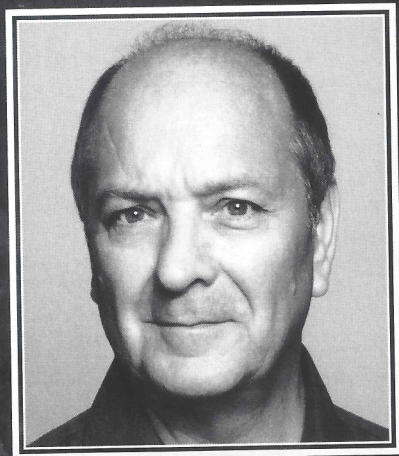
JO STEELE
LIZ REYNOLDS
LORRAINE and HANNAH LUDLOW
ITLA and QUINNEY
SHERI ROLLO
LUCY WATSON

JOHN SEELEY & CO

SPECIAL THANKS
Roy Morgan, Hugh and Eileen Greatorex of The Edith
Pargeter Estate
Dr Webster's Orchard
Tudor Watkins Tree Surgery
Early Music Shop
Tiffin School
Nicki Stoddart at United Agents
Rosemary Webster
The Cube, Malvern

Richard Walsh

• prior Leonard/assistant
Director •

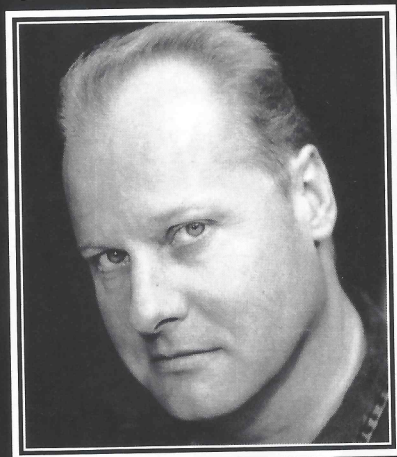


Richard Walsh starred as Bert 'Sicknote' Quigley in twelve series of the top-rated ITV drama series *London's Burning*. The series regularly got viewing figures of thirteen million and, at its height, eighteen million. After graduating from RADA, his early career was in musicals, notably *Gyps and Dolls* (National Theatre), *Chicago* (Cambridge Theatre), *The Hired Man* (Astoria) and *Kings and Clowns* (Phoenix). Other theatre credits include *Schweyck in the Second World War* and *The Beggar's Opera* (both for The National Theatre) and, for Middle Ground, *An Ideal Husband*, *Brief Encounter*, *Dial M For Murder*, *Columbo: Prescription Murder* and *Tunes of Glory*.

Richard's television credits include *Heartbeat*, *Doctors*, *Daddy's Girl*, *First Light* and *Midsomer Murders*. When he's not busy acting, Richard indulges his passion for cricket, as a member of the MCC.

Rupert Baker

• reynier dutton/guarrin •



Born and bred in Kent, Rupert trained at the Webber Douglas Academy of Dramatic Art after a false start as a graphic designer.

There followed many seasons of repertory playing such roles as *Fowler* in *Another Country*; *Algernon* in *The Importance of Being Earnest* and the German airman in *See How They Run*. Subsequent credits have included: *Henry* in *The Sloane Ranger Revue* (Duchess Theatre, West End); *Frank Crawley* in *Rebecca* (UK National Tour); *Robert* in *Stagestruck*; *Hermann Goering* in *Unpainted Pictures*; *Marston Dawlish QC* in John Mortimer's *Naked Justice*; *Victor* in *Private Lives* (English Theatre, Frankfurt); *Count Skriezevinsky* in *Flare Path* with Middle Ground with Colin Baker and *Gunby T Gunby* in Ned Sherrin's revival of *Our Song* with Peter Bowles.

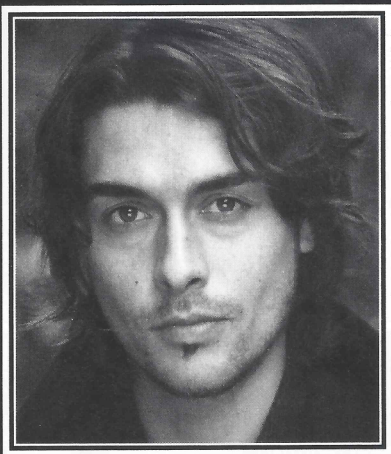
Rupert television credits include appearances in *Honest, Decent and True*; *The Case of the Frightened Lady*; *Nick Lawrence* in *Tumbledown*; *Lipstick on Your Collar*; *Turn-ups*, *Collars and Ties*; *Bugs*; *The Bill*; *Longitude*; *The Play's the Thing*; *Silver Commander* in *Stockwell*; *Steve Wright* in *The Suffolk Strangler: Crimes that Shook the World* and, most recently, *Clark Foster* in *A Question of Honour* (FFP New Media).

Rupert played *Malcolm* in the film *London's Burning* and as part of the original cast in the subsequent television series, playing the role for five years.

Rupert's work in film includes *Joseph Breitkopf* in *Mrs. Dalloway*; *Lifeforce* for Director Tobe Hooper of *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* and *Poltergeist* fame; *Tank Malling*; *Vampire Diary*, winner of best picture at The Milan Film Festival, for Director Mark James and as the *Psychiatrist* in *Feet* a short film by A.D. Cooper.

James Palmer

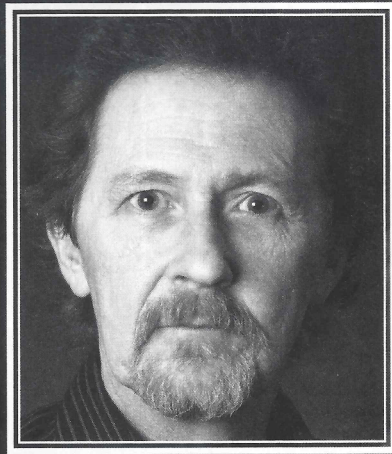
• EDWARD BOTEREL •



James grew up in Oklahoma in the United States before attending Gordonstoun School in Scotland and then training at Guildford School of Acting. He recently played Michael Parks in the world premiere of *A Piece of Cake at the Mill* at Sonning and other theatre credits include a National Tour of *Midnight* for Watershed Productions, *Augusta* at Hampstead Theatre and *Diagnosis Superstar* at Soho Theatre. James spent two years playing the leading role of Lee Hope in *River City* for BBC TV. Film Credits include recent John Newman directed comedy *Swinging with the Finkels*, *Manifesto* and *The Devil and David*.

John Langford

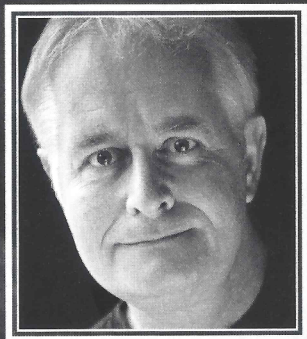
• HERWARD/THURSTAN •



John last worked with Middle Ground playing Pipe Sergeant Major McLean in *Tunes of Glory*. More recently he played Dr Robert Smith in *Blue/Orange* for Tabs Productions. John's other theatre work includes *Someone To Watch Over Me*, *Rat in the Skull* and *Oleanna* all for Tabs Productions at The Pomegranate, *Skylight*, *Copenhagen* and *A Skull* in Connemara for Mull Theatre Company and *The Count of Monte Cristo* at Manchester Royal Exchange Theatre. John has also played in many productions at The Pomegranate Theatre in Chesterfield for the late and much missed Colin McIntyre. TV work includes *Cracker*, *Grey Granite*, *Coronation Street* and *Emmerdale*.

James Morley

• ORUEL/RODULFUS •



James is delighted to be working with Middle Ground Theatre Company once again, having previously appeared in *Dial M for Murder* and *Billy Liar*.

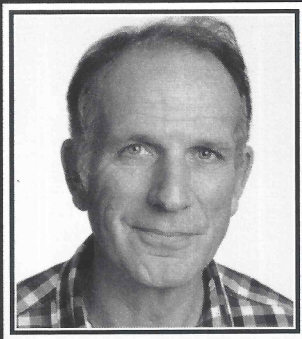
He has worked extensively in theatre in this country and abroad, appearing in Austria, Norway, Holland and Sri Lanka. He has played a variety of roles, but tends to get typecast as a duke when playing Shakespeare.

Measure for Measure, *Richard 11*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Pericles*...all dukes! He is perhaps foolishly holding out for the stage version of *The Dukes of Hazzard* as he's bound to get a part!

His TV work includes: *Casualty*, *The Lakes* and *Hetty Wainthrop Investigates*, BBC productions, *Big Meg Little Meg*, *Love Lies Bleeding* and *Coronation Street*, ITV productions and *Weekend Stories*, a WDR TV production. He is a proud supporter of Stoke City.

George Telfer

• BROTHER ELYAS •



George graduated from the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama in 1986 and since then has performed mostly in theatre. Favourite roles include Sir Robert Morton in *The Winslow Boy*, Molina in *Kiss of the Spiderwoman*, Davis in *The Caretaker*, Greg in *Sixteen Sonorous Stones*, Inspector Nelson in *Rat in the Skull*, Ellyot in *Private Lives*, Ray in *Blackbird* and Charles Rainier in *Random Harvest*.

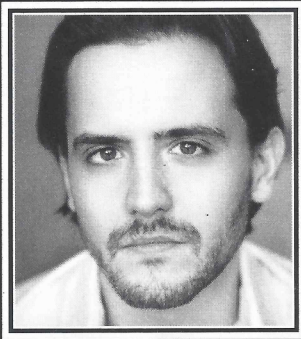
George has also written and performed two one-man plays, *Gielgud – A Knight in the Theatre* and *Burton's Last Call*. For Derby Live Theatre George played Leonato in their flagship production of *Much Ado About Nothing* and then joined them again in 2011 to play Antonio in *The Merchant of Venice*. Last year he was at Lancaster Castle where he played Don John in *Much Ado About Nothing* and then went to the Edinburgh Fringe to perform a solo show about the Duke of Edinburgh – *Do You Still Throw Spears at Each Other?*

He then appeared as John Barrett in a national tour of *Dangerous Obsession*. On film he played villain Graham Winslet in the *Dr Who Auton* trilogy and, more recently, he won the Best Actor award at the Clearwater Film Festival in Florida for his performance as Charles Wells in feature film *Innocent Crimes*. On television George played Richard Coulson in *Emmerdale*.

George is delighted to be back working with Middleground Theatre Company. He has toured with them twice before – as Lane and Merriman in *The Importance of Being Earnest* and as Dave Gordon in *Columbo*.

Christopher Berry

• ALAIN LE GAUCHER •

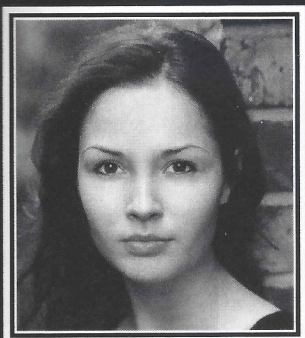


Christopher undertook degrees at universities in both Paris and Cambridge. He then completed his training at the Royal Academy of Music. After leaving college, Christopher's first role was in *The Sound of Music* at the London Palladium.

Amongst others, he has since acted in Tom Stoppard's *Rough Crossing* for Vienna's English Theatre, the UK premiere of Samuel J. Hunter's play *I Am Montana* at the Arcola Theatre and in a French-speaking European tour of *Le Petit Prince*. Christopher also performed the UK premiere of Adam Rapp's *Should've Never* at Hoxton Hall. In addition, he has been involved with rehearsed readings and workshops at the National, the Gate and the Orange Tree Theatres. Christopher's TV credits include *Victoria Wood's Midlife Christmas* and *Casualty*, both for the BBC. He also played the lead role of Stanley in the feature film *The Brightest Colours* *Make Grey* and the role of Homer Van Meter in *The Death of Jack Hamilton*.

Hannah Burton

• ermina hugonin •

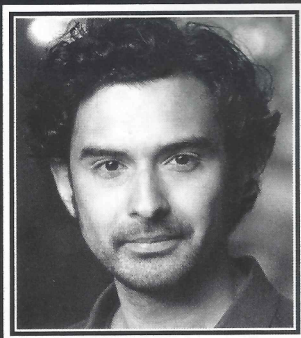


Training: The Arden School of Theatre & The Spiritual Psychology of Acting.

Theatre: *Pitch Black* (Vienna's English Theatre); *Ten Tiny Fingers*, *Nine Tiny Toes*, *Hobson's Choice*, *Our Town*, *Arabian Nights*, *All My Sons*, *The Erpingham Camp*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Three Sisters*, (all The Arden); *Spooky Tours* (Styal Mill); *Guys and Dolls* (Palace Theatre Manchester).

Tom Kanji

• olivier de Bretagne •



Tom trained at RADA.

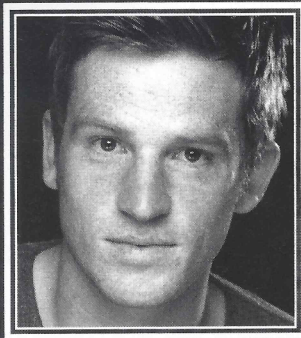
Recent theatre work includes *Much Ado About Nothing* (Ludlow Festival 2012), Fyodor in *A Russian Play* (Lion and Unicorn). Other theatre work includes *Twelfth Night* (Ludlow Festival 2011) and *Hamlet* (UK tour for Northern Broadsides), the title role in *Orhello* and Algernon in *The Importance of Being Ernest* (both for RMS QM2/RADA), *Wild Horses* (Theatre 503), *Sailing to Britain* (Tara Arts), *Back of the Throat* (Old Red Lion), *The Tempest* (Arts Theatre, Leicester Square and Tour), *The Girl, The Oil Pipe and the Murder in the Forum* and *Prints of Denmark* (Tara Studios/Edinburgh), *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* (New Vic Theatre, Stoke), and *Indian Ink* (Salisbury Playhouse).

Television credits include *Silent Witness*, *Hustle* (both for the BBC), *Midnight Man* (Carnival TV/ITV) and *Saddam's Tribe* (Channel 4), along with various commercial and corporate filming work.

Radio and Audio includes: *Auguste Levasseur* – Chef de Claquer for Radio 4, and various recordings for Spoken Ink Productions.

Paul Hassall

• hugh Beringer •



Paul grew up in the south west before heading north to train at the University of Central Lancashire, and then subsequently, via a brief stretch in Manchester, found his way down to London.

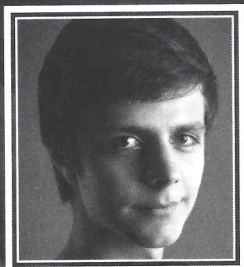
Theatre credits include *Everything Must Leave Some Kind of Mark* (Analogue/The Barbican), *2401 Objects* (Analogue), *Sitting with Thistle* (Theatre West), *The Tempest* (The Lord Chamberlain's Men), *The Impossibility Club* (Manchester 24/7 Theatre Festival) and *Hamlet* (Demi Paradise Productions).

Screen work includes the lead role in the award winning short film *The Elaborate End of Robert Ebb*, footballer Darren Scott in TV drama *The Ultimate Goal*, Lieutenant Haig in WW1 short *Cannis Belli* and the lead in the music video for the single 'Space Between' by Loadstar.

Besides acting, writing is another passionate pursuit of Paul's and he is currently working on a number of projects.

Daniel Murray

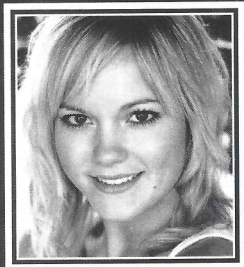
• *Joey*
bagonin/
asm •



Daniel has just returned from a tour of *The Railway Children* with M&M Productions playing Peter. He begun his career at Top Hat Youth Theatre playing leads in *Clue* and the Musicals *Rent* and *We Will Rock You*. He has also had success on screen in Commercials and Daniel's TV work includes *The Poison Tree* and *Keith Lemon's Lemonaid*.

Jenny-May Darcy

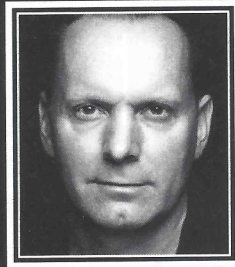
• *sister hilaria/*
understory/
asm •



Jenny-May Darcy is a Midlands born actress. She trained at The Courtyard Theatre in London (taking lead roles; Adela in *The House of Bernarda Alba*, Luciana in *The Comedy of Errors*). Since graduating in 2011 she has appeared in numerous television Commercials; (Burger King, Game, LYNX, Nokia, Chrysler, Dogs doodahs). She toured Italy playing Maid Marian in the adaptation *Robin vs Sheriff* and more recently tread the boards at the Belgrade Theatre playing Flirt Conroy in the American drama *The Dark at the Top of the Stairs* with critic's acclaim, "Jenny-May Darcy's artfully detailed, pirouetting character, Flirt, stole the acting laurels" The Stage review.

Greg Fitch

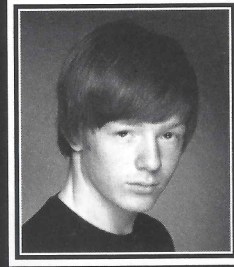
• *BROTHER*
dennis/outlaw/
understory/
asm •



Greg trained at the Bridge Theatre Training Company. Greg's theatre credits include: God in *The Mystery Plays*; British Transport Policeman and Managing Director of Railtrack in *The Permanent Way* at The Bridge; Julian Marsh in *42ND Street*, Ciaphus in *Jesus Christ Superstar*, Mack Sennet in *Mack and Mabel*, Emile De Beque in *South Pacific* at Theatre Royal, Norwich.

Adam Lloyd-James

• *BROTHER*
emano/
understory/
asm •



Adam has been in the acting industry since the age of 11, and was a Member of National Youth Theatre. He has experience in film, theatre, and voice over work. His most recent work includes; Jon in *Cake* at the (Alma Theatre-Bristol), Roger in *His Dark Materials* (Theatre Royal Bath) and has appeared in the RSC Takeover and YPT in the title role in *Richard III*. Adam will soon be appearing on screen as James in the feature film *The Anarchist's Birthday*.

Jeremy Barnaby

• company technical
manager •

Since graduating from RADA 20 years ago, Jeremy has enjoyed a very varied career within stage management. His first job was as an ASM with Century Theatre in Keswick, working on the summer rep season; this was followed by three years at the Gordon Craig Theatre in Stevenage, also as ASM, where he was involved with in-house productions such as *Return to the Forbidden Planet*, *Hot Mikado*, as well as receiving visiting companies to the Gordon Craig including: Moscow State Ballet, That'll Be the Day and Middle Ground Theatre Company.

Jeremy's first tour was *The Holly and the Ivy* for Middle Ground Theatre Company back in 2002. This was followed by their brand-new production of *Far From the Madding Crowd*, which toured throughout 2003. Since then, Jeremy has taken many different shows on tour including: *Godspell*, *The Wind in the Willows*, *Table Manners*, *Out of Order*, *The Decorator* and *The Business of Murder*.

In 2011 Jeremy spent 14 weeks in the trenches with a tour of *Oh What a Lovely War*, and last year he toured with Middle Ground's Productions of *On Golden Pond* and *The Importance of Being Earnest*.

Mat Larkin

• production manager •

Theatre productions include: *The Holly and the Ivy*, *Dial M for Murder*, *Tunes of Glory*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Billy Liar*, *Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune*, *Columbo*:

Prescription Murder, *On Golden Pond* and *Meeting Joe Strummer*.

Away from Middle Ground he runs *White Tip Media*, which provides motion picture production to corporate and broadcast clients, as well as artwork to many major hotels, bars and restaurants.

He is the author and illustrator of the *Tiger Mountain Zoo* series of children's books. Find out more at

www.tigermountainzoo.org.

Bob Hodges

• lighting design •

Bob started working in Theatre in September 1982 aged 16 at the Malvern Festival Theatre as an assistant technician. Aged 21 he got a place at Bristol Old Vic Theatre School on the Technical course and specialised in Lighting and sound. He graduated in July 1988 and worked for Orchard Theatre Company, designing and operating lighting and sound for the West Country tours, taking professional theatre to small towns and villages.

In July 1989 Bob was Deputy Chief Electrician at The Swan Theatre in Worcester and joined the Repertory Company designing many shows in that season. In 1990 Bob joined The Young Vic Of London Theatre Company on a European tour of *Educating Rita* he reproduced the lighting in 41 theatres across three countries.

In 1990 he returned to Malvern Theatre as Chief Electrician but left in 1992 to go back to Bristol Old Vic to run the New Vic Studio for the first ever touring season. In 1993 he moved to London and worked for The Arts Educational Schools Designing lighting and sound for the Dance, Drama and Musical theatre courses.

In 1998 he once again returned to Malvern Theatres as Chief Electrician and has Designed and overseen the lighting for shows ranging from Opera to Rock and Dance to Drama. He left Malvern Theatres in May 2012 to pursue a freelance career and is now a qualified NVQ Assessor in technical theatre.

This is Bob's fifth lighting design for Middle Ground Theatre Company, having previously worked with them on *Billy Liar*, *Frankie & Johnny in the Clair de Lune*, *Columbo*, and *On Golden Pond*.

Lynette Webster

• music •

Born in Kenya Lynette studied piano from the age of three, first picking out nursery rhymes on her Grandmother's knee! She took up violin at the age of six and won a music scholarship to The King's School Gloucester. She studied violin at the Conservatoire in Birmingham and gained her Licentiate of the Royal Schools of Music in performance. For 16 years Lynette has sung regularly with Aldwyn Voices - who have performed for numerous radio broadcasts and concerts. She continues to be in demand as a session musician on various tracks used world-wide for film, TV, radio and multimedia.

In addition Lynette teaches at The Elms School, Colwall, and has many private pupils. She manages as well as plays with the Capriccio Quartet and Brief Encounter Trio and has played as far afield as Monaco - at the hotel de Paris for the Monaco Boat Show. She regularly plays with several other chamber groups as a free-lance violinist as well.

She is delighted to be working with Middle Ground again having composed/performed the music for their nationally acclaimed UK touring production of *Frankie and Johnnie in the Clair De Lune* starring Kelly McGillis and also *On Golden Pond* starring Richard Johnson and Stefanie Powers. She has also recorded violin and piano for *The Importance of Being Earnest* and *The Holly And The Ivy*. Nowadays competing with music for her time and attention is her partner Michael and their beautiful, feisty 3 year old, Bethany!

Ray Mytton

• music •

Ray Mytton is a multi style guitar composer, singer, songwriter, lute player and mandolinist.

His love for music started from the age of five; his guitar techniques have been fashioned by playing and songwriting in many types of bands, from blues, rock, folk, reggae, celtic and all points in between; many of these outfits won music competitions in their day. He later studied the classical guitar with its repertoire of early music, baroque and romantic to the grade eight standard and subsequently added this to his guitar expression. Ray has performed many solo concerts to a wide range of audiences, public and private in exquisite venues. He has performed to Nigel Kennedy, Robert Plant, Catherine Howe, Gordon Giltrap and many others.

Ray writes songs for his own band Zen Archeray and also performs rock, blues and pop classics with Paul White, editor and chief of the Sound on Sound music technology magazine.

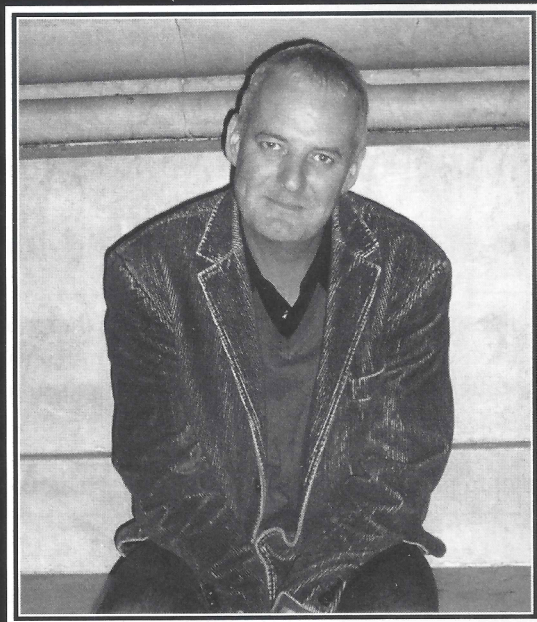
In addition Ray provides interactive music and song sessions in the Caring Profession. He works with people with disabilities and the elderly in hospitals, care homes and day centers plus tuition in schools and private tuition, alongside commissions for music such as the Cadfael theme on renaissance lute. While still composing his own music, Ray has played sessions on countless recordings for other musicians alongside his own recordings.

Of his solo album, "Enchanted Heart" the UK renowned guitarist Gordon Giltrap said, "wonderful, wistful, ethereal music performed from the heart"

Ray can be seen on YouTube and MySpace, performing his multi varied styles of music.

Michael Lunney

• adapter, director & designer •



After beginning his career as a civil/structural draughtsman, Michael changed direction slightly and went to drama school in Birmingham. He co-founded Middle Ground a few years later after working in rep in Paignton and Birmingham as well as pantomime, small-scale touring and Theatre-in-Education. Michael made his directing debut in 1995 with his interpretation of the Priestley classic *An Inspector Calls*, which played in Scotland/the Highlands and islands for 10 weeks to much acclaim.

Other Middle Ground directing includes: number one touring productions of Ernest Thompson's *On Golden Pond* (starring Stefanie Powers and Richard Johnson), Terrence McNally's *Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune* (starring Kelly McGillis), Richard Levinson and William Link's *Prescription Murder* (starring Dirk Benedict), Bill Naughton's *Spring and Port Wine*, J B Priestley's *Dangerous Corner*, Oscar Wilde's *An Ideal Husband*, Noël Coward's *Present Laughter*, Terence Rattigan's *Flare Path*, Noël Coward's *Brief Encounter*, Frederick Knott's *Dial M for Murder*, Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*, and numerous tours of Wynyard Browne's *The Holly and the Ivy*, starring Barry Foster, Dermot Walsh, Tony Britton, Philip Madoc and Stuart McGugan.

In 2001, he directed and adapted for stage William Rose's *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?* and, in 2006, he adapted, designed and directed Middle Ground's most ambitious production to date, James Kennaway's classic

drama *Tunes of Glory*, in which he also played the role of Major Charles Scott. In 2007, he produced a national tour of the punk comedy *Meeting Joe Strummer*.

Other Middle Ground designs include: *I Have Been Here Before*, *Dial M for Murder*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Billy Liar*, *Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune* and *On Golden Pond*.

Acting roles for Middle Ground Theatre Company include: Tony Wendice in *Dial M for Murder*, Jack Manningham in *Gaslight*, Harold Crompton in *Spring and Port Wine*, Inspector Martin in *The Late Edwina Black*, Arthur Fitton in *The Family Way*, Gerald Croft and Inspector Goole in *An Inspector Calls*, Walter Ormund in *I Have Been Here Before*, Dr Schlessinger in *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*, Robert Caplan in *Dangerous Corner*, Fred in *Present Laughter*, John Ruskin in *Pre-Raphaelite Seeds*, Robert Dudley in *Soe Well I Love Thee* and Inspector Hubbard in *Dial M for Murder*.

Television acting work includes: *Blackpool*, *Dream Team*, *Doctors*, *Vote for Them* and *Sweet Seventeen* for the BBC; *Coronation Street* for Granada; *The One Game* for Central; and *The Widow Maker* for Central Films. He also played the semi-regular DS Jim Garland in *Crossroads*.

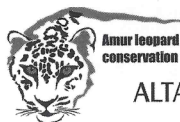


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A message of thanks

This year sees Middle Ground Theatre Company celebrate its 25th birthday.

A heartfelt thanks goes out to all the wonderful people we have worked with over the years, both cast and crew, theatre management and agents, some of whom are sadly no longer with us. To the theatres who have and continue to support our work we are forever in your debt.

A special mention to our family and friends who are always the bedrock of support we need when mounting productions, and to our long suffering partners no words of thanks are enough.

Most of all, thank you to you the audience who continue to enjoy and champion our productions and have kept our unsubsidised ship afloat for so long. We hope you are still enjoying our shows in another 25 years.

Michael Lunney
Artistic Director

Mat Larkin
Associate Director

middleground
theatre company ltd

YEARS YOUNG 1988-2013
25